

**Asian Family Services feedback on the Draft for development: Health and disability code of expectations for engaging with consumers/whānau (code of expectations)**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Health and disability code of expectations for engaging with consumers/whānau (code of expectation). This submission is made by Asian Family Services.

Asian Family Services (AFS) welcome further discussion on this submission and look forward to engaging with those working on developing a code of expectations (the code) that will set how health and disability service providers and organisations will involve and work effectively in partnership with consumers and whānau.

**Do you think this code meets its purpose? Why? Why not?**

Asian Family Services welcomes the code of expectations. It provides benchmarking and best practices on how health and disability service providers and organisations will collaborate with consumers and whānau.

Asian Family Services applauds that the Te Tiriti o Waitangi underpins this code of expectations in recognising the role of Iwi-Māori Partnership and that Māori exercise tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake in planning and decision-making for health and disability service providers and organisations.

Asian Family Services believes the code of expectation meets its purpose because

- Consumer and whānau participation is an integral component of Partner in Care
- Health and disability service providers seek the involvement of the consumer and whānau while being open and clear about the extent of involvement intended to avoid creating false expectations
- It recognises the diversity of values and opinions that exist within consumer and whānau
- It has a good healthcare service design that involves consumer and whānau participation which is crucial to the success of service delivery
- The consumer and whānau should be consulted about the healthcare design and process before the service providers finalise their approach

**How would you like to see this code working in your area of work?**

Asian Family Services has always been advocating for Asian consumers and whānau to consult with issues of health and disability, especially mental health and addiction.

**Do you have any other feedback or suggestions?**

To do it effectively, organisations have to build capacity and train staff. If done poorly, consumer/whānau participation processes can result in for example, loss of faith in the services. A negative experience may lead consumers/whānau to have negative perceptions of the outcome, and they may be less likely to participate in future processes.

The code of expectations should not be understood as a singular document but rather, show that there is a link to:

- The Health and Disability Consumer Representative Training Guide (2014)
- The Upcoming New Zealand Health Charter
- The Code and Your Rights

However, it is crucial to point out to the Health and Disability service providers that:

- Specialised consumer and whanau involvement techniques and training are required for programmes to succeed
- The information content of consumer and whanau involvement programmes should be comprehensive, balanced and accurate
- A consumer and whanau involvement programme should be tailored to suit the situation at hand
- A consumer and whanau involvement process requires adequate time and resources—successful outcomes may be undermined where these are lacking
- Health and Disability service providers staff should be skilled in consumer and whanau involvement design and processes
- When addressing the needs of specific groups or populations, special consumer and whanau involvement techniques are required
- Consumer and whanau involvement programmes should aim to capture the full diversity of people within the community—not only people that are the most active or socially capable
- Timely professional interpreting services are needed for the purpose of being able to translate key information across different languages

### **Asian Population**

The population in New Zealand has significantly changed; over 27% (707,598) of people identified as part of the Asian group in the 2018 New Zealand census, making up 15.1% of New Zealand's population. The Asian population will make up a quarter of the New Zealand population in 20 years.

Asian Family Services would like to acknowledge that the Asian population is the fastest-growing population and will make up a quarter of the New Zealand population in 20 years. The term “Asian” in New Zealand represents many cultures and ethnicities. Examples are Afghanistan in the west, India, China, Japan in the east, and Indonesia in the south.

Therefore, consumers and whanau who participate in a consultation process must comprise a broadly representative sample of the affected cohort. This means that all parties interested in the healthcare treatment and support issues/outcomes are involved throughout the process. A sound process ensures that the full spectrum of the opinions/values held by the consumer and whanau are exposed.

## **About us - Asian Family Services**

Asian Family Services is an NGO service provider for people of Asian backgrounds affected by mental health issues and gambling harm. Our gambling harm minimisation services are delivered under a Ministry of Health contract and is funded from the gambling levy. Asian Family Services also operates an Asian Helpline (telephone counselling) for Asian clients wishing to access immediate mental health support or guidance. Our services are also offered face to face in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington by qualified counsellors, psychologists, social workers, and public health practitioners who speak Cantonese, English, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Thai, and Vietnamese. All our counsellors and social workers are registered with either the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, the Social Worker Registration Board New Zealand or the Drug and Alcohol Practitioners Association Aotearoa New Zealand, as requested by the Ministry of Health, the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act.

For over 20 years, AFS has had a strong public health programme and is well known, regarded and most importantly, trusted in the Asian community and among Asian health practitioners.

In 2016 AFS established Asian Wellbeing Services to provide non-gambling related counselling, psychological intervention, tailor-made psychoeducation and therapy workshops to individuals and related organisations. All these services are offered by qualified counsellors, social workers and public health practitioners who speak English, Cantonese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Thai, and Vietnamese.

Additionally, AFS uses its website and social media channels, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and WeChat, to share mental health and addiction information and resources in Asian languages and promote our services to Asian communities nationwide.